

(iii) Information related to disciplinary action. This subparagraph refers to records of trial by courts-martial; nonjudicial punishment of military personnel under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Article 15; nonpunitive measures such as administrative reprimands and admonitions; suspensions of civilian employees; and similar documents. If the Department of the Army has not issued specific instructions on the request, the following instructions will apply. Subordinate commanders will not release any information without securing the consent of the proper installation commander. The installation commander may release the information unless the request is for a classified or "For Official Use Only" document. In that case the commander will refer the request promptly to the Chief of Legislative Liaison (see paragraph (d) of this section for action, including the recommendations of the transmitting agency and copies of the requested records with the referral.

(iv) Military personnel records. Only HQDA can release information from these records. Custodians will refer all requests from Congress directly and promptly to the Chief of Legislative Liaison, Department of the Army, HQDA (SALL) WASH DC 20310-1600.

(v) Criminal investigation records. Only the Commanding General, U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (USACIDC), can release any USACIDC-originated criminal investigation file. For further information, see AR 195-2, Criminal Investigation Activities.

(vi) Other exempt records. Commanders or chiefs will refer requests for all other categories of exempt information under § 518.33 directly to the Chief of Legislative Liaison per paragraph (d) of this section. They will include a copy of the material requested and, as appropriate, recommendations concerning release or denial.

(vii) All other records. The commander or chief with custody of the records will furnish all other information promptly.

(2) To the Federal courts, whenever ordered by officers of the court as necessary for the proper administration of justice.

(3) To other Federal Agencies, both executive and administrative, as determined by the head of a DoD Component or designee.

(i) Disciplinary actions and criminal investigations. Requests for access to, or information from, the records of disciplinary actions or criminal investigations will be honored if proper credentials are presented. Representatives of the Office of Personnel Management may be given information from personnel files of employees actually employed at organizations or activities. Each such request will be considered on its merits. The information released will be the minimum required in connection with the investigation being conducted.

(ii) Other types of requests. All other official requests received by DA elements from agencies of the executive branch (including other military departments) will be honored, if there are no compelling reasons to the contrary. If there are reasons to withhold the records, the requests will be submitted for determination of the propriety of release to the appropriate addresses shown in appendix B.

(4) To State and local officials, as determined by the head of a DoD Component or designee.

(b) DoD Components shall inform officials receiving records under the provisions of § 518.56(a), that those records are exempt from public release under the FOIA and are privileged. DOD Components shall also advise officials of any special handling instructions.

#### **§ 518.57 Required coordination.**

Before forwarding a FOIA request to an IDA for action, records custodians will obtain an opinion from their servicing judge advocate concerning the releasability of the requested records. A copy of that legal review, the original FOIA request, two copies of the requested information (with one copy clearly indicating which portions are recommended for withholding, which FOIA exemptions support such withholding, and which portions, if any, have already been released), a copy of the interim response acknowledging receipt and notifying the requester of the referral to the IDA, and a cover letter containing a telephone point of contact

will be forwarded to the IDA with the command's recommendation to deny a request in whole or in part.

#### INITIAL DETERMINATIONS

##### **§ 518.58 Initial denial authority.**

(a) Components shall limit the number of IDAs appointed. In designating its IDAs, a DoD Component shall balance the goals of centralization of authority to promote uniform decisions and decentralization to facilitate responding to each request within the time limitations of the FOIA. The DA officials in paragraph (d) of this section are designated as the Army's only IDAs. Only an IDA, his or her delegate, or the Secretary of the Army can deny FOIA requests for DA records. Each IDA will act on direct and referred requests for records within his or her area of functional responsibility. (See the proper AR in the 10-series for full discussions of these areas; they are outlined in paragraph (d) of this section.) Included are records created or kept within the IDA's area of responsibility; records retired by, or referred to, the IDA's headquarters or office; and records of predecessor organizations. If a request involves the areas of more than one IDA, the IDA to whom the request was originally addressed will normally respond to it; however, the affected IDAs may consult on such requests and agree on responsibility for them. IDAs will complete all required coordination at initial denial level. This includes classified records retired to the National Archives and Records Administration when a mandatory declassification review is necessary.

(b) The initial determination of whether to make a record available or grant a fee waiver upon request may be made by any suitable official designated by the DoD Component in published regulations. The presence of the marking "For Official Use Only" does not relieve the designated official of the responsibility to review the requested record for the purpose of determining whether an exemption under this Regulation is applicable and should be invoked. DAs may delegate all or part of their authority to an office chief or subordinate commander. Such delegations must not slow FOIA

actions. If an IDA's delegate denies a FOIA or fee waiver request, the delegate must clearly state that he or she is acting for the IDA and identify the IDA by name and position in the written response to the requester. IDAs will send the names, offices, and telephone numbers of their delegates to the Director of Information Systems for Command, Control, Communications, and Computers. IDAs will keep this information current. (The mailing address is HQDA (SAIS-PS), WASH DC 20310-0107.

(c) The officials designated by DoD Components to make initial determinations should consult with public affairs officers (PAOs) to become familiar with subject matter that is considered to be newsworthy, and advise PAOs of all requests from news media representatives. In addition, the officials should inform PAOs in advance when they intend to withhold or partially withhold a record, if it appears that the withholding action may be challenged in the media. A FOIA release or denial action, appeal, or court review may generate public or press interest. In such case, the IDA (or delegate) should consult the Chief of Public Affairs or the command or organization PAO. The IDA should inform the PAO contacted of the issue and obtain advice and recommendations on handling its public affairs aspect. Any advice or recommendations requested or obtained should be limited to this aspect. Coordination must be completed within the 10-day FOIA response limit. (The point of contact for the Army Chief of Public Affairs is HQDA (SAPA-OSR), WASH DC 20310-1500; telephone, AUTOVON 227-4122 or commercial (202) 697-4122.) If the request involves actual or potential litigation against the United States, release must be coordinated with The Judge Advocate General. (See § 518.54(e).)

(d) The following officials are designated IDAs for the areas of responsibility outlined below:

(1) The Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army is authorized to act for the Secretary of the Army on requests for all records maintained by the Office of the Secretary of the Army and its serviced activities, except those specified in paragraphs